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SPIES ARE

# 'Where the Spies Are':

## Charm, Hokum

### "WHERE THE SPIES ARE"

SHOWCASE NEIGHBORHOOD THEATERS

A screenplay by Val Guest and Wolf Mankowitz, based on the novel "Passport to Oblivion" by James Leasor, directed and produced by Val Guest, presented in color by MGM. Running time: One hour and 50 minutes. With the following cast:

Dr. Jason Love.....David Niven  
 Vikki.....Francoise Dorleac  
 Col. MacGillivray.....John Le Mesurier  
 Rosser.....Cyril Cusack  
 Farouk.....Eric Pohlmann  
 Jaber.....Richard Manner  
 Simmlas.....Paul Stassino  
 1st Man.....George Pravda  
 Mr. Kahn.....Reginald Beckwith  
 Assassin.....George Mikell  
 Parkington.....Nigel Davenport  
 2nd Man.....Gabor Borokor  
 Stanislaus.....Ronald Radd

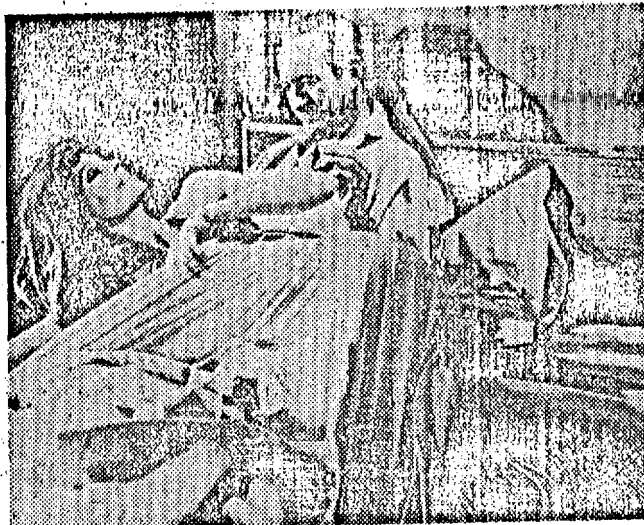
By Judith Crist

"Where the Spies Are" is better than most of the schizophrenic spy-spoofs we're being subjected to these days; only its split personality, alas, keeps it from being as good as it should be.

In bringing James Leasor's novel to the screen, neither Wolf Mankowitz, as co-author, nor Val Guest, as co-author, director and producer, has solved the problem of just how anti-romantic and at the same time anti-realistic they can afford to get about the reluctant spy caught in some super-nasty global goings-on. They're trapped twixt Fleming and Le Carre and undecided about whose side they're on.

The result is a melange of urbane satire, sordid realism and dime-novel nonsense decked out with topicality. Confronted by the simply lus-

### THE NEW MOVIE



Francoise Dorleac and David Niven discuss their mutual problems of espionage in "Where the Spies Are."

trous Francoise Dorleac, reluctant-and-cynical-spy David Niven remarks, "I thought contacts like you only happen in paperbacks"—and how right he is.

Tuck your intelligence out of the way, however—and who among us doesn't as he gets the hang of the genre?—and

you can go with this one up to a point. Confronted with the disappearance of still another agent in the Middle East (and there are glorious location shots in Lebanon for this film), the weary head of British Intelligence starts scraping the bottom of the barrel for a replacement.

He finally hits upon Dr. Jason Love, a middle-aged physician who agrees to look up the missing agent in return for a rare classic Cord, provided, of course, he doesn't have to behave like either Superman or the Black Mask. "That sort of exhibitionism invariably ends in tragedy," his chief notes. And though he's equipped with fountain pen, watch and attache case just brimming with death-dealing devices, a fellow agent in the field says, "Take my advice—get rid of that bloody gear and get yourself a good heavy gun."

Before long, Love is up to his heart with Miss Dorleac and his ears with Soviet agents and proves himself quite fit, at least physically. Bright he isn't—you and I tumble to the double-agency of the lady

long before he does ("I work for Vogue, I work for Harper's—what difference which side?" this model young lady finally remarks).

But courageous he is and he gives just about as much as he can take until he gets into the inevitable bind of finding that the truth won't work.

Thanks to Mr. Niven's middle-aged but still notable charm, Dr. Love emerges as a rather palatable fall guy. John Le Mesurier is perfection as the pedantic but efficient head of intelligence; Eric Pohlmann is fine as a sinister character with a passion for classic cars, and Nigel Davenport is very good as the seasoned spy in action.

There are a couple of dandy chases and a thoroughly hokey finale—and it all depends on your tolerance for charm and hokum "Where the Spies Are."